

Press Release

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"Home of RCEs in Asia Pacific"

Grand opening of RCE Tongyeong Sejahtera Forest

May 23, 2015

RCE Tongyeong invited as one of 20 partner organizations of UNESCO Global Action Programme in Training

Tongyeong City(Mayor Kim Dong Jin) and Tongyeong Education Foundation for Sustainable Development(Chairperson Park Eun Kyung) held the Opening Ceremony of RCE Tongyeong EcoPark & Sejahtera Centre for RCEs in Asia Pacific, newly named as "Sejahtera Forest", together with 7th Tongyeong ESD(Education for Sustainable Development) International Forum on May 23 2015. The 248,000 m² park in Yongnam myeon, Tongyeong City has been constructed since 2007 with support from Ministry of Environment, and is to become education hub "Sejahtera Centre for Regional Centres of Expertise in the Asia-Pacific". Facilities at RCE Tongyeong Eco Park include creative learning spaces at Sejahtera Centre, vegetable farm, sustainable technology playground, and wetland, which can host maximum 3000 people.

At the opening ceremony on May 23, 700 participants and guests including Alexander Leicht, Chief of ESD section at UNESCO, Mahesh Pradhan Head of Environmental Education and Training Unit of UNEP, Masao Omori Mayor of Okayama city, Japan and delegates from 17 RCE cities of Asia Pacific region and representatives of 10 ASEAN member states were present.

7th Tongyeong ESD International Forum was held under the theme of "The role of Sejahtera Centre in promoting ESD in Asia Pacific region." During the 1st 'Sejahtera Roundtable for Policy Makers', ten roundtable members commonly stressed the importance of the role of Sejahtera Centre as Asia Pacific platform in promoting ESD in GAP process. Suggestion was made also on the importance of inter-continental partnership, for example with Wangari Maatai Institute in Africa. Members of Sejahtera Network of Asia Pacific RCEs mentioned accumulation of ESD resources, the common biannual theme of 'traditional knowledge' under the philosophical approach of Sejahtera(balance, coexistence), and designation of RCE Penang as the RCE of the Year 2015 as the starting point of regional collaboration. RCE Tongyeong has been invited as a one of 20 members of the 'Partner Networks of the UNESCO

Global Action Programme on ESD' in priority action area 3 'Building capacities of educators and trainers' and the Sejahtera Center has been set up to serve as a regional training platform in the Asia Pacific. As shared by participants of the opening, Asia Pacific RCEs now have a home to connect and collaborate, and on behalf of 24 members of Sejahtera Network, we wish to invite suggestions and ideas to make full use of this regional hub.

(Contact: www.rce.or.kr/ 055-650-7400).

Photo 1. Invitation to the Opening Ceremony

Photo 2-4. Photos of the Sejahtera Centre